

GEORGE A. ROMERO

AR MARVEL

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD™ #1

ILLUSTRATED BY
ALEX MALEEV



PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED...
THE GREATEST CITY IN THE EMPIRE STATE BECAME AN...
EMPIRE OF THE DEAD

Welcome to

New York

THE EMPIRE STATE
OF THE DEAD

• **GEORGE ROMERO**

WRITER

MATT HOLLINGSWORTH

COLOR ARTIST

ARTHUR SUYDAM

NYC VARIANT COVER ARTIST

ALEX MALEEV

ARTIST & COVER ARTIST

VC'S CORY PETIT

LETTERER

FRANK CHO & JASON KEITH

CHARIOT VARIANT COVER ARTISTS

IDEINNE WINECOOR

PRODUCTION

PETER GRUNWALD

PRODUCER

JAKE THOMAS
ASSISTANT EDITOR

BILL ROSEMAN
EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

SPECIAL THANKS TO JORGE ZAFFINO, WHOSE ART
INFLUENCED MY APPROACH ON THIS BOOK. - ALEX MALEEV

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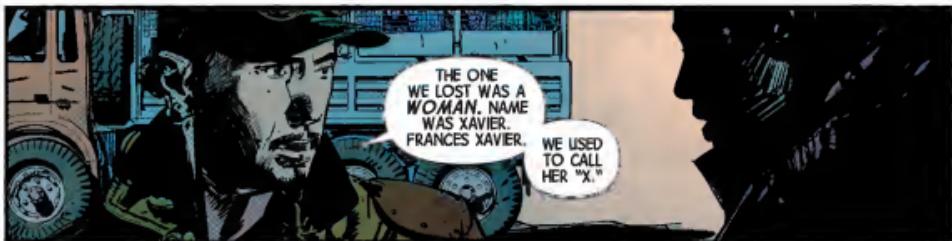






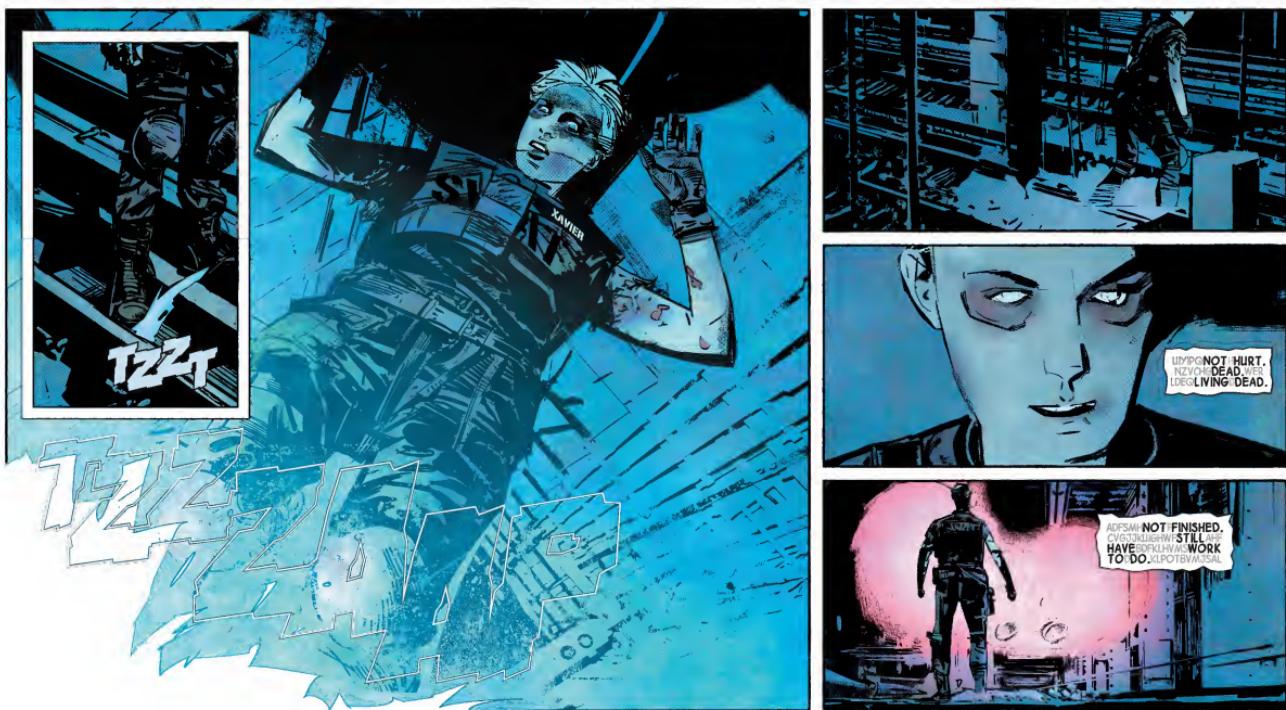


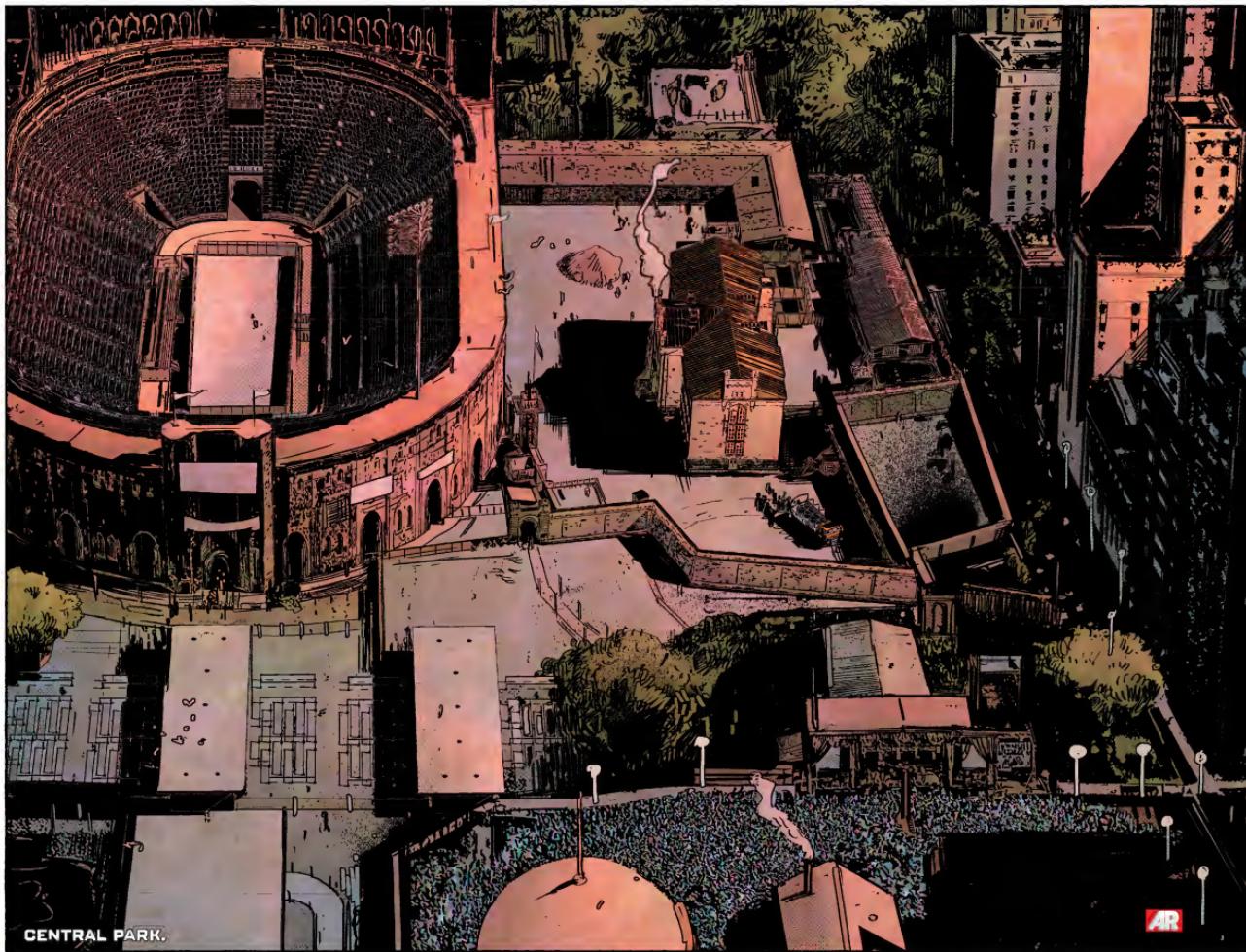
BATTERY PARK.



"COME ON, WE'VE GOT
A TRAIN TO CATCH."







CENTRAL PARK.

AR

WHAT TIME
DO THE GAMES
BEGIN?

CENTRAL PARK ZOO.

ARENA OPENS AT NINE.
WE OFFER A NUMBER OF
BASIC ENTERTAINMENTS FOR
EARLYBIRDS, SO...LOTS OF
PEOPLE COME EARLY.

ZANZIBAR'S
MY MAIN MAN.
SURVIVED DOZENS OF
FIGHTS. HARDLY NEEDED
ANY TRAINING, JUST
NATURALLY AGGRESSIVE,
I GUESS.















I ASKED PAUL
TO BRING YOU
HERE TO SEE IF IT
WAS POSSIBLE.



THAT ONE
WHO SEEMED SO
ATTRACTIVE FROM AFAR,
WOULD REMAIN JUST AS
ATTRACTIVE ONCE WE
WERE...CLOSER.



I HOPE
WE'LL BE SEEING
MORE OF EACH
OTHER.

YOU'LL
ARRANGE FOR
THAT, WON'T
YOU, PAUL?





I'M FORCED TO BE A G.P.
THESE DAYS. SHORTAGE OF
DOCS IN THE CITY. BUT MY
SPECIALTY IS PEDIATRIC
MEDICINE.

A8

YOU'RE A KID
DOCTOR?

QUALIFIES ME
TO WORK WITH
ZOMBIES. THEY'RE SORT
OF LIKE CHIMPANZEES. THEY
HAVE THE MENTAL CAPACITY
OF A THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD.
JUST ENOUGH UPSTAIRS
TO TRAIN THEM.

WE TRAIN
THEM TO
FIGHT. FOR
EVERY SCRAP
OF FOOD
THEY GET.

MAKE ME
A DEAL, WILL
YOU?

DEPENDS...

GIVE ME ONE
OF YOUR FLESH-EATERS.
LET ME WORK WITH HIM
OR HER FOR TWO WEEKS
AND I'LL BRING BACK A
ZOMBIE WHO IS...I WON'T
SAY TAME, BUT...NON-
AGGRESSIVE.

IMPOSSIBLE.
BUT, OKAY,
IT'S A DEAL.



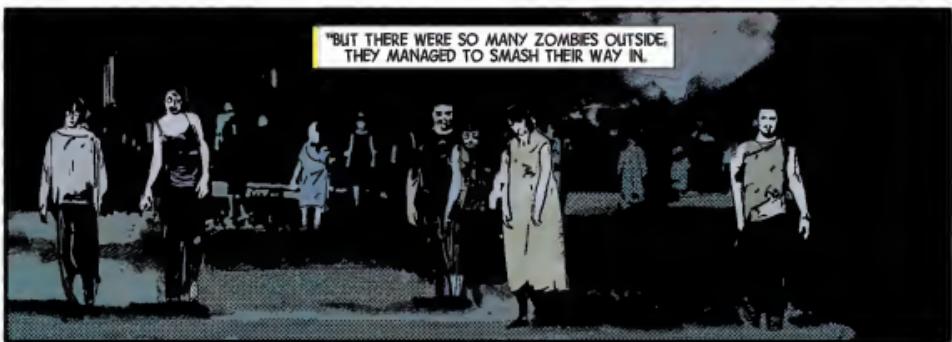
"MY SISTER MADE IT TO AN OLD FARMHOUSE, WHERE SHE FOUND SIX OTHER PEOPLE ALIVE.



"THEY REINFORCED THE WINDOWS AND DOORS. THEY MANAGED TO STAY SAFE FOR SEVERAL HOURS.



"BUT THERE WERE SO MANY ZOMBIES OUTSIDE, THEY MANAGED TO SMASH THEIR WAY IN.



"MY BROTHER WAS AMONG THE DEAD BY THEN.



"HE DRAGGED MY SISTER OUT OF THE HOUSE. EVERYONE BELIEVED HE WAS GOING TO KILL HER.



"HE DRAGGED HER INTO AN ABANDONED BARN AND WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK HER."



"THEN SUDENLY, HE SEEMED TO RECOGNIZE WHO SHE WAS."



"YOU KNOW ME, DON'T YOU?" SHE SAID. "I CAN TELL."



"THEN THE SHERIFF CAME WITH AN ARMED BAND OF LOCAL VIGILANTES. THEY COULD SEE MY SISTER IN THE OPEN DOORWAY OF THE BARN."

"HERE!" SHE CALLED OUT. "OVER HERE!"









UNDERGROUND.







YOU'RE SCARED, AREN'T YOU?

IT'S OKAY TO ADMIT IT. THIS IS A FRIGHTENING WORLD WE LIVE IN – SOCIETAL BREAKDOWN, OUTBREAKS OF DRUG-RESISTANT DISEASES, DISAPPEARING RESOURCES, CLASS WARFARE DUE TO THE EVER-WIDENING INCOME GAP – WHATEVER'S YOUR POISON, YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT AT NUMEROUS NEWS WEBSITES, AND ALSO IN THE PAGES OF THIS SERIES.

AS ANY FAN WORTH THEIR SALT WILL TELL YOU, STORIES STARRING THE UNDEAD ARE NOT JUST ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE ON THE SURFACE. YES, SCRATCH JUST BENEATH ITS ROTTED FLESH AND YOU'LL SEE THAT THIS UNSTOPPABLE GENRE CAN BE USED BY GOOD STORYTELLERS FOR INSIGHTFUL SOCIAL COMMENTARY. AND FILM DIRECTOR, SCREENWRITER, EDITOR AND LIVING LEGEND GEORGE ROMERO...WELL, YOU DON'T NEED ME TO TELL YOU THAT HE'S A MASTER STORYTELLER. WITHOUT HIS TRAIL-BLAZING WORK, WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE ZOMBIE GENRE AT ALL, WOULD WE?

NOW GEORGE HAS RETURNED TO A MEDIUM THAT HE LOVES TO SHOW US ALL HOW IT'S DONE, AND LIKE ANY GOOD UNDEAD INVASION, HE'S NOT ALONE. WATCHING OVER OUR NIGHTMARISH DREAM TEAM LIKE MAYOR CHANDRAKE HIMSELF ARE GEORGE'S CREATIVE PARTNER, PETER GRUNWALD, AND OUR VERY OWN EDITOR IN CHIEF AXEL ALONSO, WHO HAVE OFFERED HOURS OF GRUESOME GUIDANCE.

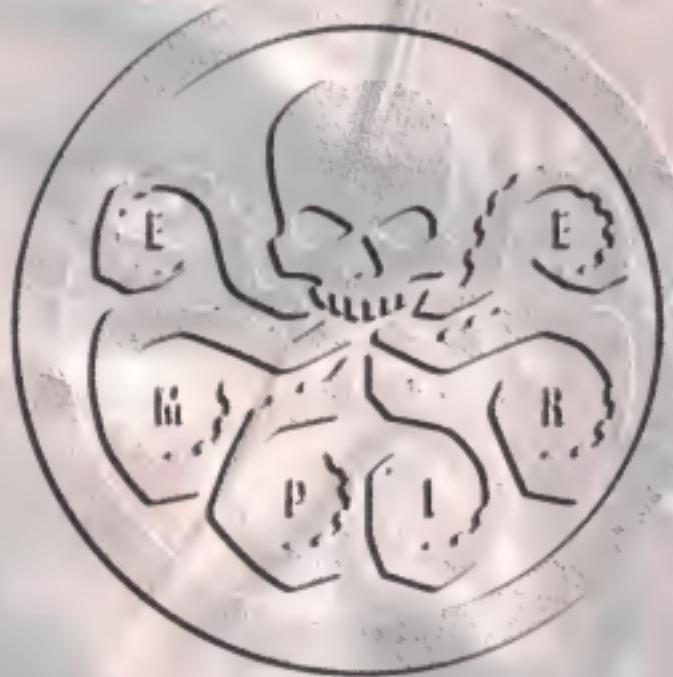
BRINGING THIS UNDEAD EPIC TO THRILLING LIFE IS THE AWARD-WINNING MURDERERS' ROW OF CREATORS INCLUDING THE AMAZING ARTIST ALEX MALEEV, COLOSSAL COLORIST MATT HOLLINGSWORTH AND LETHAL LETTERER CORY PETIT, WHO ARE ALL POURING THEIR BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS INTO EACH AND EVERY PANEL.

SPEAKING OF SPILLED FLUIDS, HOWZABOUT THE DISCOVERY THAT VAMPIRES HAVE INFESTED THE BIG APPLE AS WELL? WHO WILL WIN IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE BLOOD-SUCKERS AND THE FLESH EATERS? AND WHAT ABOUT US POOR HUMANS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE? SEE YOU HERE NEXT ISSUE AS WE ALL BEGIN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THOSE CREEPY QUESTIONS. TALK ABOUT SCARY TIMES...

YOUR MAN @ MARVEL,
BILL ROSEMAN

NEXT:





N / A L / I



MARVEL | 002

PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!

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ILLUSTRATED BY
ALEX MALEEV



Welcome to

New York

THE EMPIRE ~~STATE~~



PAUL
BARNUM



MAYOR
CHANDRAKE



PENNY
JONES



XAVIER



BILL
CHANDRAKE

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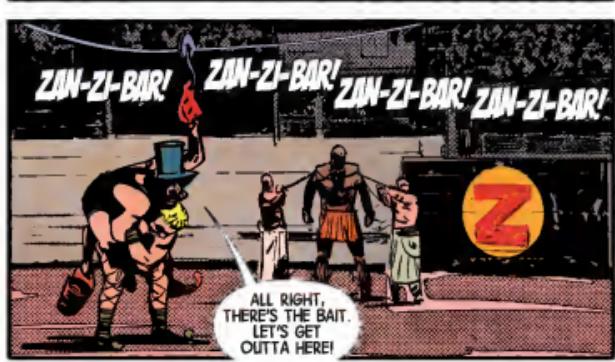
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CENTRAL PARK
CIRCUS MAXIMUS
ARENA.







CENTRAL PARK
POLICE PRECINCT

YOU
WAITED, ALL
THIS TIME.

PAUL BARNUM,
MANAGER OF THE ARENA

YOU
OWE ME
A RIDE HOME.

PENNY JONES,
PEDIATRICIAN.

I PREFER TO
THINK YOU
WERE WORRIED
ABOUT ME.

MMMM...
THAT,
TOO.

HAD TO
FILE A REPORT,
IS ALL TOLD YA.
I'M IN GOOD
WITH THE CITY.

SLIPSHOD
GOT YOUR GAMES
GOING. ZANZIBAR'S
FIGHTING RIGHT NOW.
I HEARD HIM BEING
INTRODUCED.

HE MUST
HAVE WON, OR
MAYBE HE LOST.
CROWD DOESN'T
REALLY CARE
WHICH WAY IT
GOES.

STOP!





XAVIER. THIS IS THE ONE I
TOLD YOU ABOUT. THE ONE
WHO WENT MISSING
DOWNTOWN.

I TOLD
YOU I SAW
A SWAT
OFFICER.

CAN I HAVE
WE MADE A DEAL,
HER? REMEMBER?
WHAT?

YES, BUT, I
CAN'T JUST...
I MEAN...I'LL
HAVE TO GET
PERMISSION.

YOU MEAN FROM
THE MAYOR? HE
SEEMS TO LIKE ME.
I'M SURE HE'LL
APPROVE.

OH, I'M SURE HE
WILL ONLY...YOU
NEVER KNOW WHAT
ELSE MIGHT BE
INVOLVED.

WHEN
CHANDRAK
LIKES
YOU, SOMETIMES THERE
ARE...UNEXPECTED
COMPLICATIONS.

LET ME
WORRY ABOUT
THAT.

OKAY, YOU
WANT THIS
STINKER... I'LL
GIVE IT A
SHOT.

I'M GONNA
WHIP YOU INTO
SHAPE, MISSY...

...TEACH
YOU SOME
MANERS.

TEACH ME NO,
KVBDS WHIP ME?
XFGP NO, THSRE
I WHIP YOU!

BENEATH THE ARENA.

ANYONE WHO STEALS FROM THE CIRCUS IS STEALING FROM THE MAYOR. HE TAKES A SPECIAL INTEREST IN SUCH CASES. THIS PRISONER COMES WITH US.

ER... MAY I HAVE YOUR NAME, PLEASE?

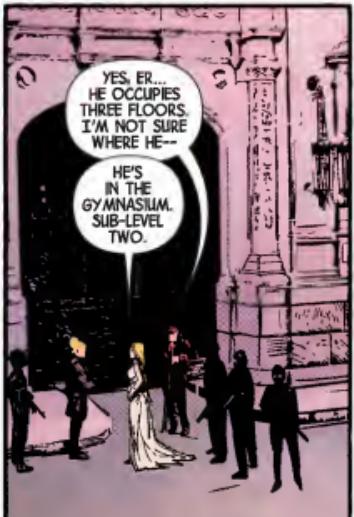


I'M "NUMBER ONE" THAT SHOULD TELL YOU NOT TO ARGUE WITH ME.



THE DAKOTA.

MAYOR CHANDRAKE IS EXPECTING ME, JONES. PENNY.



YES, ER... HE OCCUPIES THREE FLOORS. I'M NOT SURE WHERE HE--

HE'S IN THE GYMNASIUM. SUB-LEVEL TWO.



DON'T DO ANYTHING I WOULDN'T DO.







A FEMALE, ONCE A SWAT OFFICER. SHE SEEMS TO STILL HAVE AN INSTINCT FOR THE JOB. SHE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR CAPTURING A THIEF AT THE ARENA LAST NIGHT.





THE DAKOTA.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,
AS YOU ALL KNOW, WE HAVE
A SERIOUS PROBLEM. ONE
WHICH THREATENS OUR
VERY EXISTENCE.

I'M SPEAKING
ABOUT OUR ALIEN
POPULATION. I CALL THEM
"ALIENS" BECAUSE THEY ARE
NOT US! I WILL DO MY
BEST TO ERADICATE
THEM ALL!

LOWER EAST SIDE.

I AM
DEDICATED TO
THE SURVIVAL
OF THE SOCIETY
IT HAS TAKEN US
SO LONG TO
CONSTRUCT.

AND I
SINCERELY HOPE
THAT, WHEN THE TIME
COMES TO CAST YOUR
VOTES, YOU WILL HELP
REELECT ME AS
MAYOR OF THIS...THE
GREATEST CITY IN
THE WORLD.





LISTEN. FOR
EVERY BEEF YOU
HAVE AGAINST CHANDRAKE,
I'VE GOT A DOZEN OF
'EM. BUT I'M LIVIN' GOOD.
YOU'RE LIVIN' GOOD.
LOTTA FOLKS OUT THERE
CAN'T SAY THE
SAME, SO MY ADVICE
TO YOU IS...





LATER.

I HAVE AN APPETITE.

YOU
ALWAYS HAVE
AN APPETITE.

SORRY, DARLING.
I'M EXHAUSTED.
AND I...HAVEN'T
EATEN. I'D NEVER
BE ABLE TO SATISFY
YOU. I'VE SENT
FOR THE PRISONER.

DON'T BE AFRAID.
MY LADIES WILL BE
MERCIFUL.
M-MERCIFUL?

YES, THEY
WON'T ALL GO
AFTER YOU TOGETHER.
THEY'LL DO IT ONE AT
A TIME. IT SHOULD
HAVE THE EFFECT OF
PROLONGING YOUR
PLEASURE.

P-PLEASURE?

INDEED.
FOR BOTH YOU AND
FOR THEM, MY LADIES
ARE WELL EDUCATED IN
THE ARTS OF...CARNAL
GRATIFICATION.









THIS...THIS IS...
REALLY SOMETHIN'
YOU DON'T GET
THIS EVERY DAY.



IF YOU WANT
IT...YOU CAN HAVE IT.
ANY TIME. THERE ARE
HUNDREDS OF US OUT HERE.
HUNDREDS WHO CAN GIVE
YOU...FEELINGS...THAT
YOU'VE NEVER FELT
BEFORE.



MMMM,
YEEEEEAH...
YEAHH...



NO! NO!

AAAUAUGH!

TO BE CONTINUED...

UNDEAD LETTERS

I FIRST SAW **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** SHAMEFULLY LATE FOR A HORROR GEEK. I'D BEEN AFRAID OF IT, YOU SEE. IT'S GOT A REPUTATION. ONE OF THE SCARIEST MOVIES EVER MADE! STRANGE AND VISCERAL! A HIGH WATERMARK FOR HORROR! FINALLY, I DECIDED TO BUCKLE DOWN AND TAKE THE PLUNGE. WHEN THE MOVIE FINISHED I SAT ALONE THINKING, "THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE GOES CRAZY OVER?" IT WASN'T AS GORY AS **EVIL DEAD 2**, AS UNRELENTINGLY TENSE AS **THE SHINING**, AS ETHEREALLY HAUNTING AS **THE INNOCENTS**... I SHRUGGED AND FIGURED MAYBE I JUST DIDN'T GET IT.

I DIDN'T. BUT THEN I DID. BECAUSE **NOTLD** WORKS, OR AT LEAST WORKED ON ME, MUCH LIKE THE UNDEAD IN THE FILM ITSELF. IT COMES ON SHAMBLY AND ODD, BUT SEEMINGLY BENIGN. IT BEGINS IN A PURPOSEFULLY HAMMY PASTICHE OF '50S SCI-FI HORROR, WITH OUR VERY RETRO JOHNNY AND BARBARA. THE FIRST ATTACK SEEKS TO SUCCEED ONLY BY SURPRISE AND BARBARA'S PROPENSITY FOR HYSTERICS. IT'S EASY TO THINK "WELL, COME ON, I COULD SURVIVE THAT."

THEN, SLOWLY BUT SURELY, IT OVERWELMS YOU. THE FARMHOUSE. THE REFUGEES. BEN AND HIS IDEALS OF DOOMED PRACTICALITY AND ALTRUISM. THAT SHAMBLY NATURE OF EARLIER SCENES TURNS SINISTER AND HORRIFYING. WHEN BEN THROWS THAT FLAMING CHAIR OUT ONTO THE PORCH, IT LOOKS LIKE THAT WHOLE DAMN PLACE MIGHT CATCH ON FIRE. AND THE NUMBERS OF THE UNDEAD JUST KEEP GROWING...

AND THEN, FINALLY, IT SINKS ITS TEETH INTO YOU, AND YOU'RE DONE. FOR DAYS AFTER I COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT. BARBARA, WHO SHOULD BE OUR STRONG FEMALE PROTAGONIST, SUCCUMBS TO NUMBING SHOCK, ONLY TO GET PULLED INTO THE UNDEAD MASSES BY HER OWN BROTHER JUST WHEN SHE SPRINGS INTO ACTION. THAT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN! THEN THERE'S HARRY, SELFISH AND SCARED. BUT WHO WOULDN'T BE? AND DIDN'T THE BASEMENT END UP

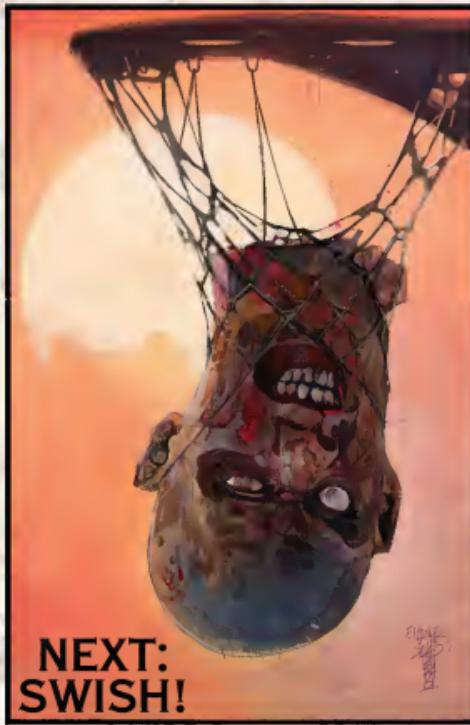
BEING THE SAFEST PLACE AFTER ALL? AND HIS WIFE, WITH THE DAUGHTER? OOF. AND BEN. POOR, POOR BEN.

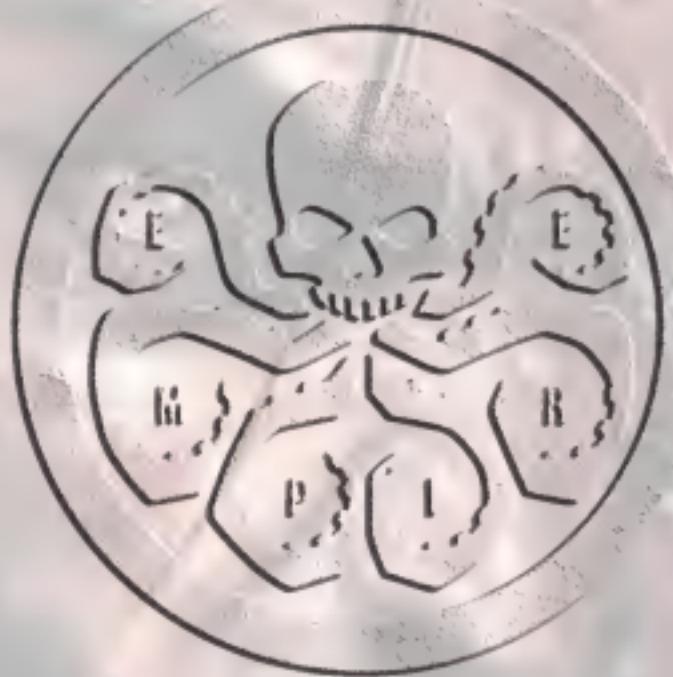
SO I WATCHED THE MOVIE AGAIN. AND THEN AGAIN. AND THEN AGAIN. AND I WATCHED **DAWN AND DAY**. I SAW **LAND, DIARY, SURVIVAL**. I BECAME A FULL-FLEDGED UNDEADHEAD. WHEN I INHERITED A DIGITAL PROJECTOR FROM A FRIEND OF MINE, **NOTLD** WAS THE FIRST MOVIE I PUT IN.

AND NOW HE'S BACK. TO SEE A NEW ROMERO STORY TAKING FORM IS THE THRILL OF A LIFETIME. AND TO BRING IN VAMPIRES? I KNOW ROMERO'S THE GODFATHER OF ZOMBIES, BUT HAVE YOU SEEN **MARTIN**? IF NOT, CORRECT THAT. IT'S ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE VAMPIRE MOVIES (AND INCLUDES A CAMEO BY ROMERO HIMSELF! AS A PRIEST). AND IN ROMERO'S TRUE ICONOCLAST STYLE, AT A TIME WHEN TV AND FILM ARE INUNDATED WITH HORRIFIC ZOMBIES AND ROMANTIC VAMPIRES, THIS BOOK DELIVERS SYMPATHETIC UNDEAD AND VAMPIRES UNAPOLOGETICALLY HUNGRY FOR BLOOD. BECAUSE ROMERO'S GOING TO TELL HIS STORY HIS WAY, AND IF YOU'RE A FAN LIKE I AM, THAT IS HOWLING, SCREAMING, HORRIFYING MUSIC TO YOUR EARS.

GET EXCITED. STAY WEIRD. AIM FOR THE HEAD OR THE HEART, DEPENDING ON THE TEETH.

-JAKE T.





N / A / L / I



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OF THE
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003

MARVEL

PARENTAL
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EMPIRE
OF THE
DEAD
003

Welcome to

New York

THE EMPIRE STATE



PAUL
BARNUM



MAYOR
CHANDRAKE



PENNY
JONES



XAVIER



BILL
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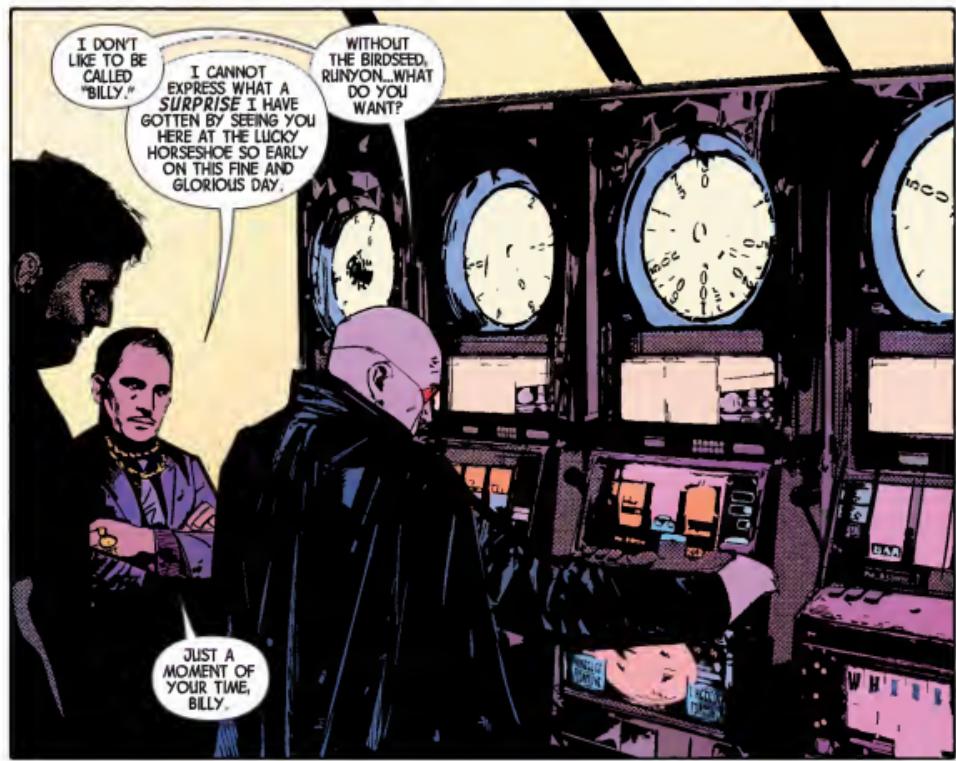
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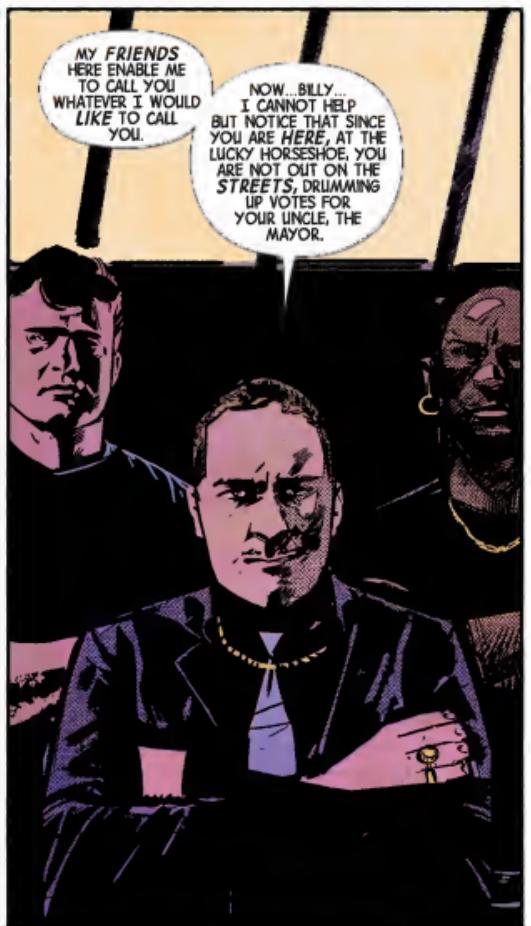
DOWNTOWN.

NOW WE
WAIT. GOTTA
MAKE SURE THE
GARBAGE GETS
PICKED UP.

N-NO.
MMMM-
NO.







CENTRAL PARK ZOO,
THE ARENA.

XAVIER,
THRUST!



GOOD.
THAT'S...
VERY, VERY
GOOD.



THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO AIM AT THOSE HOLEs IN THE HELMETS. SPEAR IN THE BRAIN IS A SURE KILL. BUT ZOMBIES ARE TOO UNCOORDINATED TO EVER HIT A SPOT THAT SMALL.



YOUR
ZOMBIE?

CHANDRAKE
TURNED XAVIER
OVER TO ME,
BARNUM. THANKS
FOR PUTTING IN
A GOOD
WORD.

READY TO
TRY THIS FOR
REAL, SIR...



I'M NOT SURE I CAN ALLOW THAT. XAVIER IS NO LONGER UNDER MY JURISDICTION.

GO AHEAD. I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

SHE COULD GET INJURED. PENNY MIGHT FINISH HER DAYS AS A FIGHTER.

I DON'T WANT HER TO BE A FIGHTER. I WANT HER TO BE A PEACEMAKER.



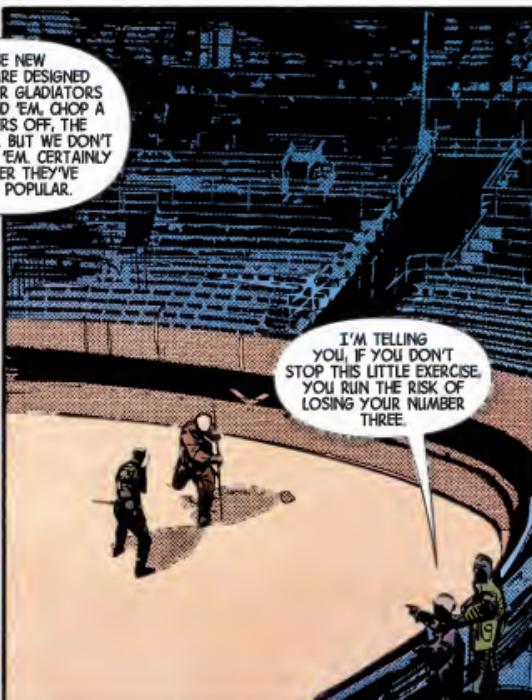
ZANZIBAR'S MY HEADLINER. LITTLE FEMALE CALLED PEANUTS IS MY SECOND BEST. SLOBBY'S MY NUMBER THREE.

YOU MIGHT LOSE HIM, RIGHT HERE.



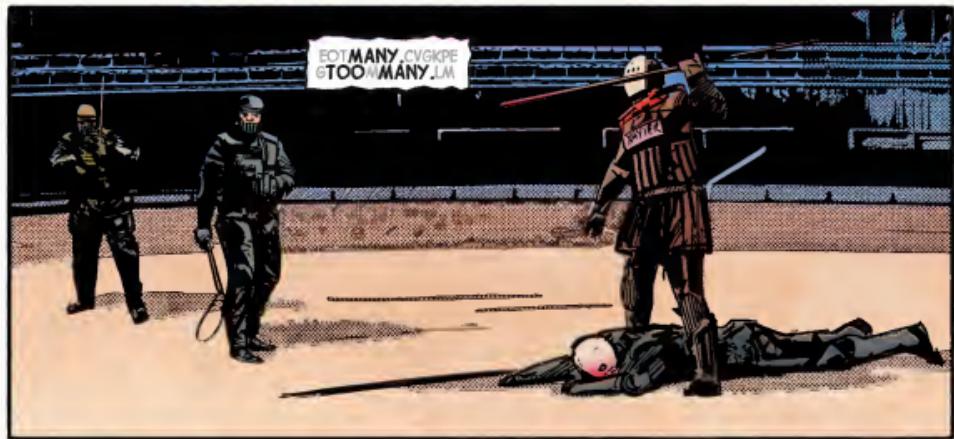
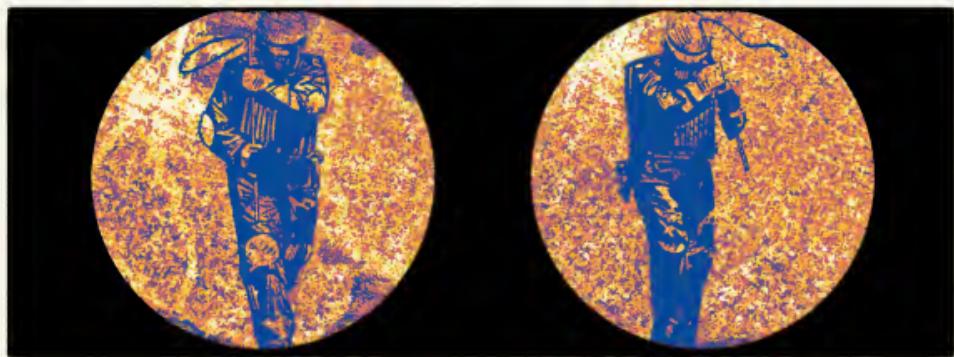
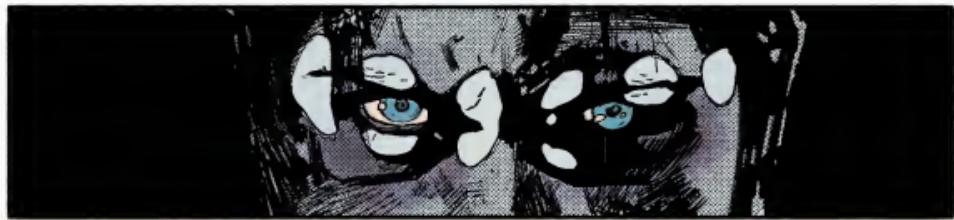
NO SPASTIC FLESH-EATER CAN HIT THAT THREE-INCH MARK WITH A LONG-HANDED SPEAR.

THESE NEW ARMORS ARE DESIGNED TO KEEP OUR GLADIATORS ALIVE. WOUND 'EM, CHOP A FEW FINGERS OFF, THE FANS LOVE IT. BUT WE DON'T WANNA KILL 'EM, CERTAINLY NOT AFTER THEY'VE BECOME POPULAR.



I'M TELLING YOU, IF YOU DON'T STOP THIS LITTLE EXERCISE, YOU RUN THE RISK OF LOSING YOUR NUMBER THREE.





CHANDRAKE'S PENTHOUSE.

FOR CENTURIES... POSSIBLY LONGER...

CENTURIES. GOT IT. MAYBE LONGER.

HUMANS HAVE THREATENED US WITH EXTINCTION.

NOW THE WORLD IS THREATENED BECAUSE OF THIS NEW KIND OF... DEAD THING.

OKAY, MINDY. HOW'S THIS? OVER THE YEARS, MAN HAS BEEN OUR NEMESIS. BUT ALSO OUR NOURISHMENT.

THAT IMPLIES THERE IS AN "OLD" KIND OF DEAD THING, WHICH MEANS US! POLITICAL SUICIDE IF PEOPLE REALIZE THAT WE'RE ALSO LIVING DEAD.

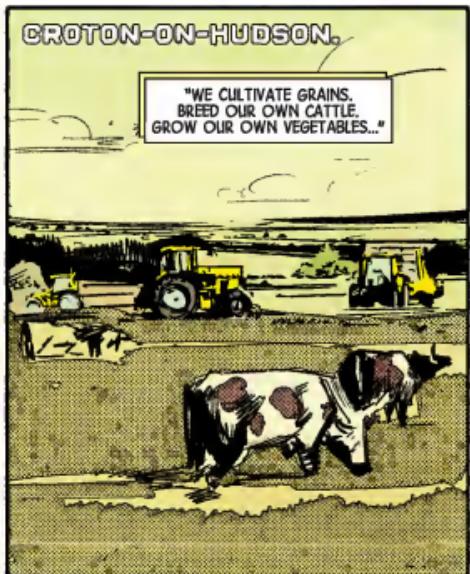
LISTEN. YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT YOU NEED TO BE RE-ELECTED AS MAYOR OF NEW YORK. NOT THE MAYOR OF BLOOD-SUCKING NEW YORK.

WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE DRINKING?

YOUR SPECIAL BRAND OF MANHATTAN RED. WHAT ELSE?

NO, NO. NO, I HAVE THAT BOTTLED TO SATISFY THE RIFF-RAFF.

BRANIGAN. BRING US A BOTTLE OF THE... FRESHEST.



NEAR COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY.



MOMENTS LATER.





COLUMBIA
HOSPITAL.

I'M DOCTOR
PENNY JONES. CAN
YOU TELL ME WHAT
HAPPENED?

TWO GUYS,
DROPPED HER
LIKE A HOT
POTATO AND
TOOK OFF.

THERE
ARE WOUNDS
PRETTY MUCH
ALL OVER HER
BODY.

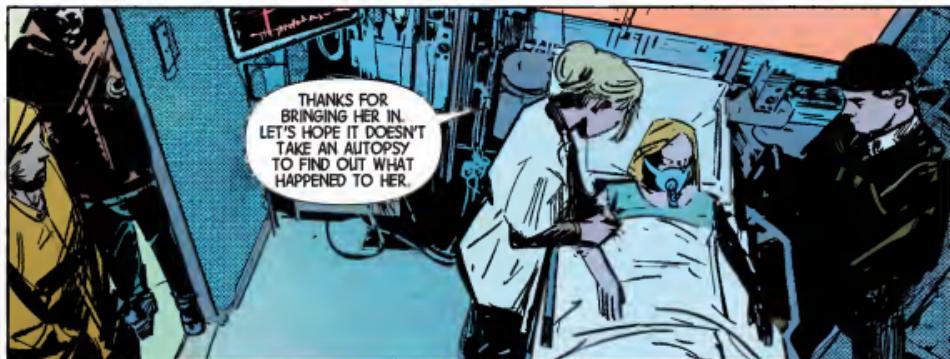
AMBULANCE



SOME OF
THE WOUNDS DO
LOOK LIKE BITES,
BUT...IT'S NOT
NEARLY WHAT WE
FIND WHEN A FLESH-
EATER GETS HOLD
OF SOMEONE.



THANKS FOR
BRINGING HER IN.
LET'S HOPE IT DOESN'T
TAKE AN AUTOPSY
TO FIND OUT WHAT
HAPPENED TO HER.



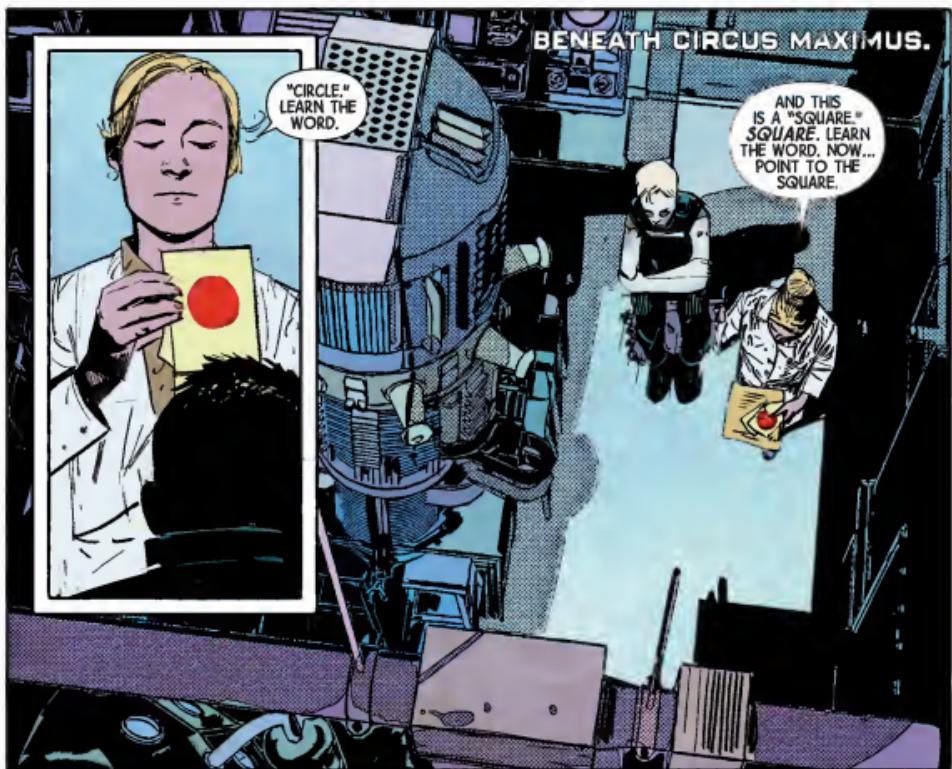
EAST 14TH STREET.







BENEATH CIRCUS MAXIMUS.





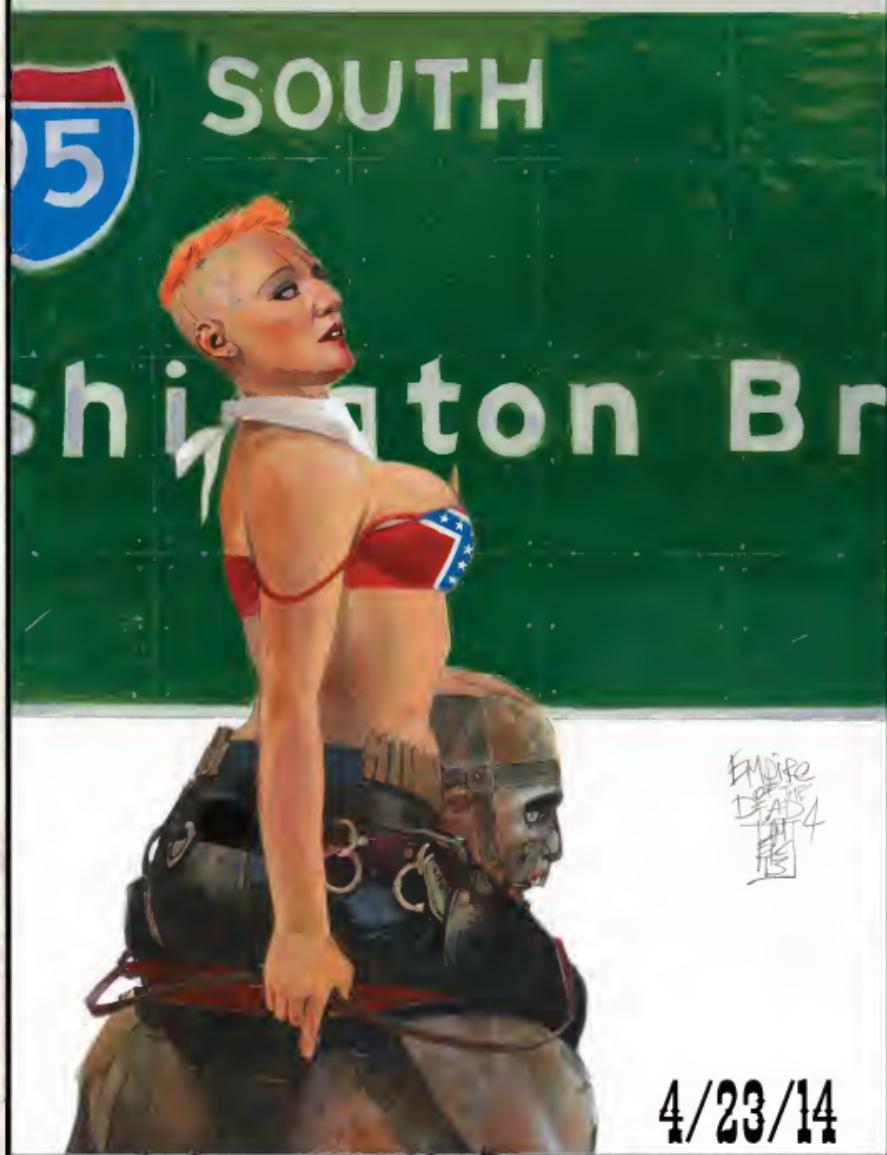
AN HOUR LATER.

I TOLD YER
BOSS HE COULD HAVE
AS MANY SHOTS AS HE
WANTED, BUT THIS IS
RIDICULOUS!

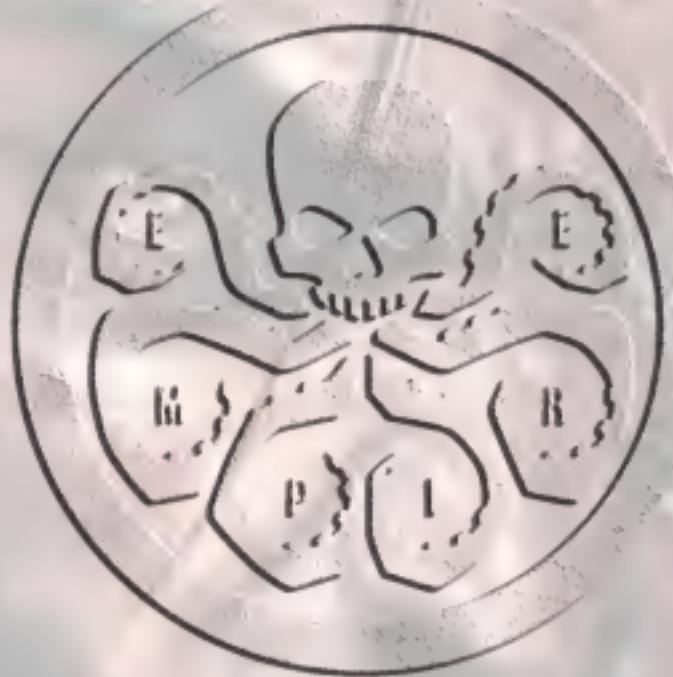




NEXT: WHISTLIN' DIXIE PAST THE GRAVEYARD!



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N / A / L / I



GEORGE A. ROMERO
ALEX MALEEV

SOUTH

EMPIRE
OF THE
DEAD

PARENTAL
ADVISORY!
NOT FOR KIDS!

004

MARVEL

EMPIRE
OF THE
DEAD 4
TOM ELLIS



Welcome to **New York**

THE EMPIRE ~~STATE~~

DE THE DEAD



PAUL
BARNUM



MAYOR
CHANDRAKE



PENNY
JONES



XAVIER



BILL
CHANDRAKE

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE. THE CITY IS SAFEGUARDED BY THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE, WHO RULES THE CITY WITH HIS SECRET CABAL OF VAMPIRES! CHANDRAKE KEEPS THE MASSES ENTERTAINED USING ZOMBIES AS GLADIATORS, BUT PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND A ZOMBIE WRANGLER NAMED PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME THE ZOMBIE GLADIATOR XAVIER, WHO EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE...THAT IS, UNTIL XAVIER USES HER INTELLIGENCE TO ESCAPE! ELSEWHERE, ANOTHER SMARTER-THAN-AVERAGE ZOMBIE, LITTLE JOHN, LEADS A GROUP OF ZOMBIES UPTOWN THROUGH THE UNGUARDED SUBWAYS, TOWARDS THE CENTER OF THE CITY'S LIVING HUMANS...

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PUBLISHER

ALPHABET CITY.



GUESS
YOU AIN'T
GETTIN' MY
SANDWICH.





UNDER THE ARENA.



→YAWN!
GOTTA...STAY AWAKE.
GOTTA FIND...→YAWN! THE
THING THAT MAKES THE
FLESH-EATERS DIFFERENT...
FROM US.

THEY'RE NOT
THAT DIFFERENT.
FROM...SOME
OF US.

MAYOR! Y-YOU
SCARED ME. I DIDN'T
THINK YOU MADE...
HOUSE CALLS.

I NORMALLY
DON'T, MS. JONES.
PARTICULARLY NOT AT
THREE IN THE MORNING.
BUT YOU'RE A NIGHT
OWL, LIKE ME.

I CALLED
YOUR HOSPITAL.
THEY TOLD ME
YOU WERE HERE.
I THOUGHT I'D
COME AND
SEE...

BUT THIS? THIS IS
IMPOSSIBLE. HOW CAN
YOU WORK IN THESE
CONDITIONS?

I CAN'T ALLOW
IT. I'M GOING TO
SET UP A WHOLE NEW
LABORATORY FOR
YOU.

I'M GRATEFUL
TO BE HERE. PAUL
MADE ROOM FOR ME
AND IT'S REALLY
USEFUL TO BE CLOSE
TO MY...PATIENTS.

WHY ARE
YOU TAKING SUCH
AN INTEREST?

I'M THE MAYOR OF
THIS CITY. THE FLESH-
EATERS POSE A THREAT
TO ALL OF US...ALL OF
US WHO ARE STILL
ALIVE.

IF YOU
CAN FIND A
WAY TO TAME
THEM...

I DON'T
THINK I CAN...
ANY MORE THAN
I COULD TAME
A LION.

THEY'RE
NATURALLY
AGGRESSIVE. WHAT
I'M TRYING TO DO
IS RE-CHANNEL
THAT AGGRESSION.

THINK OF ME AS A LION.
WHAT WOULD YOU DO
WITH ME...

IF I WERE
TO COME AFTER
YOU?

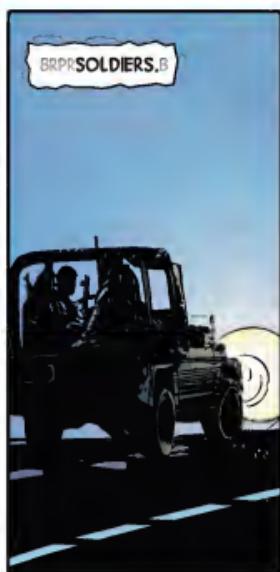
I WOULD
POLITELY ASK
YOU...TO GO
AWAY.

I WOULDN'T
GO EASILY.
I'M ALWAYS
SEARCHING
FOR...

...ANOTHER
ADDITION...TO
MY PRIDE.



FDR DRIVE.



ONLY
NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE.

ONLY

ONLY

CASH





BARNUM'S APARTMENT.

YOU DIDN'T...
DO ANYTHING
WITH HIM, DID
YOU? I MEAN...
PHYSICALLY.

NO.
BUT I
WANTED
TO.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
COMES OVER ME. WHATEVER HE WANTS
ME TO THINK, FEEL
WHATEVER HE WANTS
ME TO FEEL...

...IT'S LIKE HE
MAKES ME THINK...

YOU HAVE TO RESIST. I
KNOW HOW HARD IT CAN
BE. BELIEVE ME, I KNOW.
BUT YOU HAVE TO...
HAVE TO...RESIST.

REMEMBER
YOU SAID...WHEN
CHANDRAK LIKES A
PERSON, SOMETIMES THERE
CAN BE "UNEXPECTED
COMPLICATIONS"?

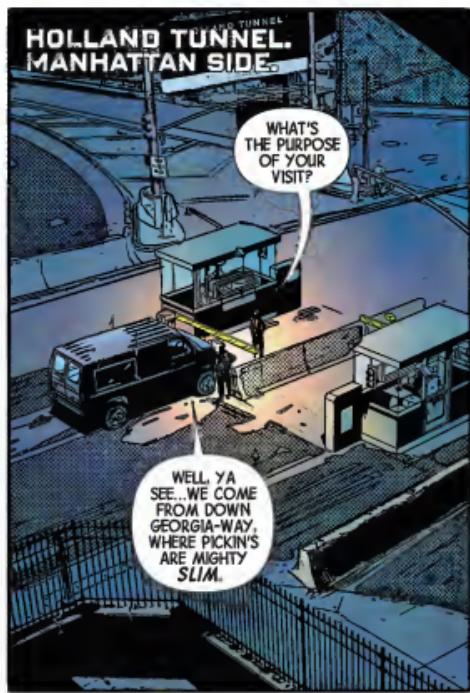
WHAT DID
YOU MEAN BY
THAT?

AREN'T
WE ALL?

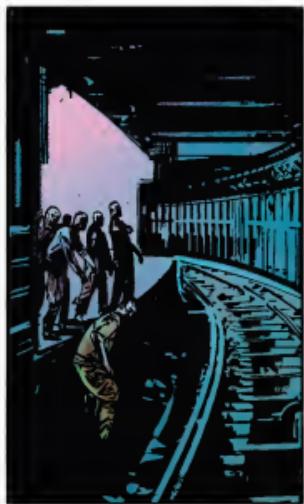
BUT ME...
I'M WILLING
TO WAIT.

YOU
KNOW WHAT
MEN ARE
LIKE. CERTAIN
KINDS OF MEN.

ARE YOU
THAT KIND OF
MAN?











COPS
ALL OVER THE
PLACE.

HOLLAND TUNNEL,
MANHATTAN SIDE.



TOOK 'EM
TWENTY-THREE MINUTES
TO SHOW UP. SO, ON THE
DAY, WE'LL HAVE TWENTY-
THREE MINUTES TO
SCRAM.

LET'S
SCRAM
NOW.



THAT VIDEO RECORDER
WILL NOT REVEAL ANYTHING
EVER AGAIN. BUT THERE IS
ANOTHER EYE. ONE THAT
SEES...ALL.



UP THERE. IT IS
VERY OLD, BUT IF IT IS
STILL WATCHING...

...WE MIGHT
CATCH A GLIMPSE
OF OUR MURDERER.

TRAILERS
5 TONS
PER AXLE

UP
BARRIER
K-100



I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE NOT HOLDING THIS AGAINST ME. I'VE HEARD THAT WHEN...SINGLE DIGIT NUMBERS SHOW THEMSELVES... IT USUALLY MEANS--

IT USUALLY MEANS EXCOMMUNICATION.



NOT IN YOUR CASE,
AS LONG AS YOU REMAIN
COOPERATIVE. MAY I
ASK, THIS MEETING YOU
ARRANGED...

...WHERE WAS
IT SUPPOSED TO
TAKE PLACE?



HEY!



A SURE KILL. WHETHER YOU'RE ONE OF US OR NOT, A SLIVER OF WOOD IN THE HEART, AND YOU'RE FINISHED.

HOW MANY EXCOMMUNICATIONS HAVE YOU ATTENDED?

YOU'RE NEW TO OUR MEMBERSHIP.

I WAS HONORED TWO YEARS AGO.

THIS IS MY FIRST. SO, I'M GRATEFUL THAT YOU TRUSTED ME WITH THIS RESPONSIBILITY...

HNNEGH!

HOLY--!

RRAAARR!

B
A
M

OUR MEMBERS
HAVE ALWAYS HAD
A HARD TIME
UNDERSTANDING
THAT ANYONE--

--ANYONE--

-WHO DIES
THESE DAYS,
BECOMES A
FLESH-EATER.

BUT
YOU AND I,
SIR--

--AND THIS
ONE--

--WE ALL
DIED.

ONCE.

AND WHEN WE DID,
SOME STRANGE FORCE
CAME OVER US. WHATEVER THAT
FORCE IS, WHATEVER IT IS THAT
INFECTS US, THAT SAME MAGICAL,
MYSTERIOUS GERM PRESERVES
US SOMEHOW.

IT'S A
BLESSING
AND A CURSE.

CURSE?

1

FOR CENTURIES, A
SLIVER OF WOOD SEEMED
TO BE THE ONLY THING
THAT COULD KILL US. THEN,
TO OUR DISAPPOINTMENT, WE
DISCOVERED THAT IT DIDN'T
NEED TO BE WOOD. ANYTHING
THAT SEPARATED THE HEART,
LEFT FROM RIGHT, WOULD
DESTROY US.

WE'VE ALWAYS
THOUGHT OF OURSELVES
AS IMMORTAL. THE
ULTIMATE DISAPPOINTMENT
COMES WITH THE
REALIZATION THAT...

...WE STILL
HAVE TO FACE
DEATH.

IN THAT WAY,
WE MIGHT AS WELL
BE HUMAN.

77TH STREET.

GEEZ!



RRRRRBBBBBRRRBRRBBBRRBR

SO
MANY DEAD
THINGS!



TRWMPERBBCDD
DANGER.HSG

SWAT

TRAIN.



SSRDANGER.RH

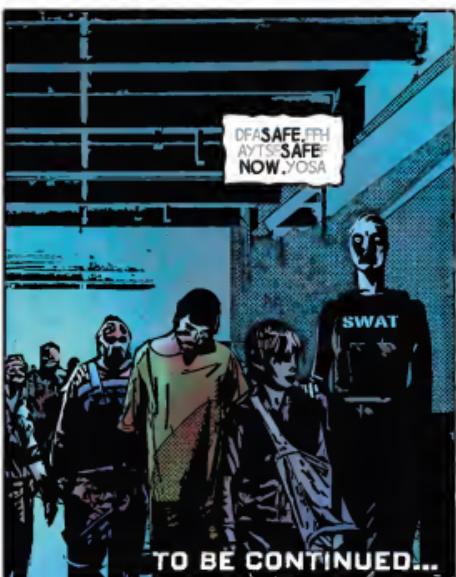
RRRRRBBBBBRRRB

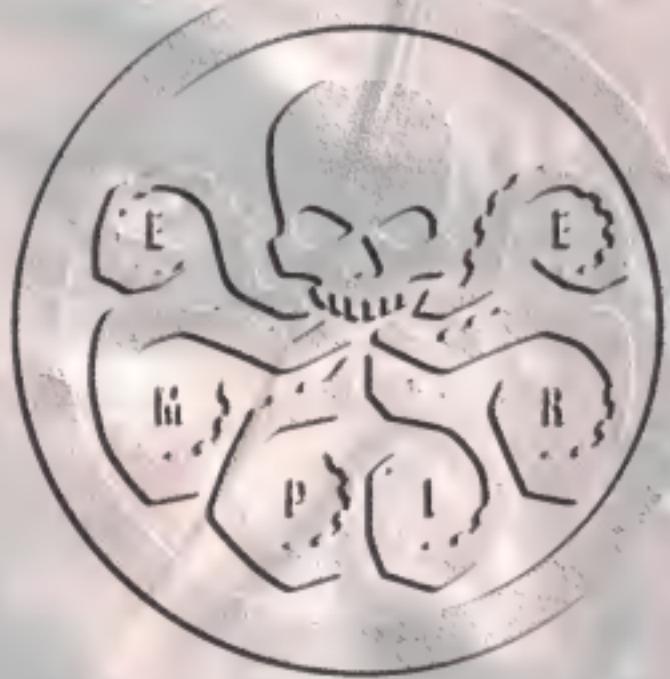


ASFSAF OFF G
ATDIT THE GH
BTRACKS.GTS

MICROSSA
FF HURRY
GHDEETTA







N / A / L / I



GEORGE A. ROMERO

EMPIRE OF THE DEAD™

ILLUSTRATED BY
ALEX MALEEV

005

MARVEL

PARENTAL
AOWISY!
NOT FOR KIDS!

EMPIRE
OF THE
DEAD 5

Welcome to **New York**



PAUL
BARNUM



MAYOR
CHANDRAKE



PENNY
JONES



XAVIER



BILL
CHANDRAKE

THE EMPIRE ~~STATE~~

**OF THE
DEAD**

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED, NEW YORK CITY HAS BECOME A FORTRESS OF ISOLATION AGAINST THE UNDEAD PLAGUE VIA THE MILITARISTIC FORCES OF MAYOR CHANDRAKE AND HIS SECRET CABAL OF VAMPIRES! TWO VAMPIRES HAVE AN UNSANCTIONED MEAL, FEASTING ON A YOUNG WOMAN. INTERRUPTED BEFORE THEY CAN USE ZOMBIES TO DISPOSE OF THE BODY, THEY RUN, AND THE BITTEN WOMAN IS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL.

PENNY JONES, A MEDICAL SCIENTIST, AND ZOMBIE WRANGLER PAUL BARNUM ARE WORKING TO TAME A ZOMBIE NAMED XAVIER WHO EXHIBITS INTELLIGENCE...THAT IS, UNTIL XAVIER ESCAPES! OUTSIDE, XAVIER PROTECTS A STREET ORPHAN NAMED JO AND JOINS WITH ANOTHER SMARTER-THAN-AVERAGE ZOMBIE, LITTLE JOHN, WHO LEADS A GROUP OF ZOMBIES THROUGH THE UNGUARDED SUBWAYS, TOWARDS THE CITY'S LIVING HUMANS. ELSEWHERE, A SOUTHERN REBEL NAMED DIXIE PEACH HAS INFILTRATED THE CITY WITH A VAN OF ARMAMENTS AND A DESIRE TO SEE THE SOUTH RISE AGAIN!

GEORGE ROMERO
WRITER

MATT HOLLINGSWORTH
COLOR ARTIST

ALEX MALEEV
ARTIST & COVER ARTIST
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DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

UNDER THE ARENA.

GOIN'
HOME, DR.
JONES?

DON'T I
WISH. I'M ON
NIGHT SHIFT AT
THE HOSPITAL
BERNIE.

I'M ALWAYS
ON NIGHT SHIFT,
BUT I DON'T ALSO
WORK DAYS, LIKE
YOU DO.



EXIT

SCRATCH

HELLO!
ANYONE
THERE?
BERNIE?





86TH STREET
SUBWAY.



DON'T BE
AFRAID OF THEM.
THEY'RE LOUD, BUT
THEY'RE ALL PUSSY
CATS.

THERE WAS
MORE OF 'EM.
WHOLE BUNCH GOT
TOOK OUT BY A TRAIN.
THESE ONES? THEY
WERE SMART. SMART
ENOUGH TO GET OUTA
THE WAY. XAVIER
SHOWED 'EM HOW
TO HIDE.

HOOORRUGH!



BARNUM'S OFFICE TRAILER.







TRANSIT AUTHORITY
PROCESSING CENTER.

WAKE UP.
GOT SOME
EVIDENCE
HERE.



BUTTERCUP'S BROTHEL.



10 MINUTES LATER.

YOUR FRIEND,
JINGO, LOOKIN'
MEAN AS A COPPERHEAD.
DON'T KNOW WHAT
HE MIGHT BE FIXIN'
TO DO.

Drip
Drip
Drip

THAT
CRAZY
SONUV...



JINGO!

WE HAVE TO
FIGURE A WAY
TO KEEP THIS
QUIET.

WHY?
SOME JOHN
WENT LOCO,
IS ALL.

GET
OUT! CLEAN
YOURSELF UP
AND GET THE
HELL OUT
OF HERE!

SOME JOHN
WHO SUCKED ALL THE
BLOOD OUT OF A HOOKER!
VAMPIRES ARE SUPPOSED TO
BE FICTIONAL! WE CAN'T RUN
THE RISK OF SOMEBODY FROM
HOMICIDE SUSPECTING THAT WE
MIGHT ACTUALLY EXIST!



COLUMBIA HOSPITAL,
THE NEXT MORNING.

SHE'S NOT
READY FOR A SOLID
MEAL, BUT...BRING
IT IN, JUST TO SEE
HOW SHE REACTS.

MELODY?
IT'S MORNING.
WOULD YOU
LIKE SOMETHING
TO EAT?



MAYOR CHANDRAKE'S APARTMENT.

Glad you could come, Bill. Bit early for you, isn't it?
And for you, Uncle.

Oh, no. I'm often up early.



HAPPY THING,
ISN'T IT? THAT ALL
THOSE MYTHS ABOUT
SUNLIGHT TURNING
US TO DUST ARE JUST
THAT. **MYTHS**.
OTHERWISE PEOPLE
MIGHT SUSPECT...

...THAT YOU MIGHT
BE A VAMPIRE, OR
THAT...EVEN I MIGHT
BE ONE.

→GULP!
SO...YOU
KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED LAST
NIGHT.

I KNOW
THAT YOU ARE
DANGEROUS.

I WAS
JUST TRYING
TO--

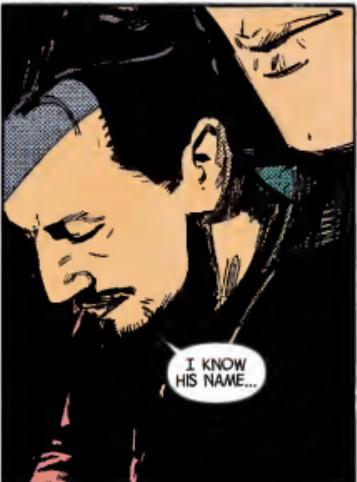
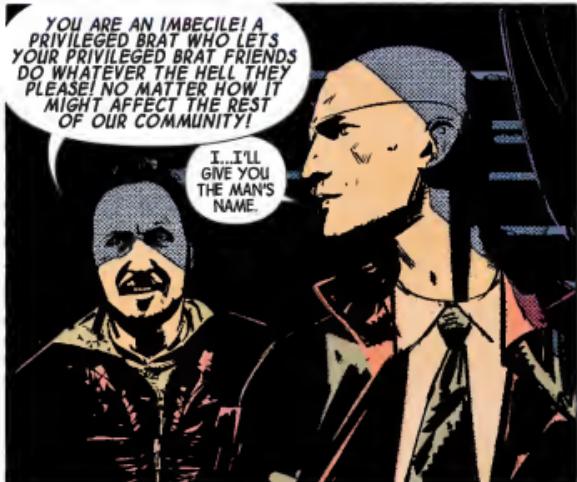
COVER FOR
YOUR FRIEND,
WHO IS ALSO
DANGEROUS.



YOU ARE AN IMBECILE! A
PRIVILEGED BRAT WHO LETS
YOUR PRIVILEGED BRAT FRIENDS
DO WHATEVER THE HELL THEY
PLEASE! NO MATTER HOW IT
MIGHT AFFECT THE REST
OF OUR COMMUNITY!

I...I'LL
GIVE YOU
THE MAN'S
NAME.

I KNOW
HIS NAME...



UPPER WEST SIDE.

"...IT'S BEEN
TAKEN CARE OF."

HOLD IT
RIGHT THERE,
JINGO.

AAAARGGGH!

SLISH

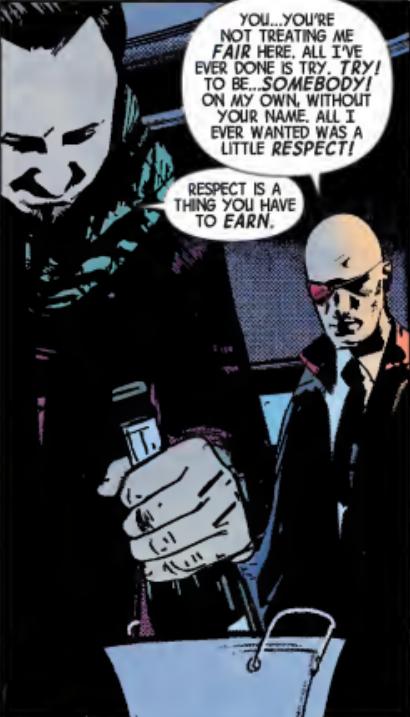




SO I'M GOING TO DO
YOU A FAVOR. AS OF THIS
MOMENT YOU HAVE NO FURTHER
OBLIGATIONS. NOT BUTTERCUP'S.
NOT THE RAT FARMS. YOU'RE
FREE, TO SPEND ALL YOUR
TIME ON...ALCOHOL, WOMEN
AND MONEY.

IF THAT'S
THE WAY YOU
WANT TO PUT
IT, YES.

IN OTHER
WORDS...I'M
FIRED.



YOU...YOU'RE
NOT TREATING ME
FAIR HERE. ALL I'VE
EVER DONE IS TRY, TRY!
TO BE...SOMEBODY!
ON MY OWN, WITHOUT
YOUR NAME. ALL I
EVER WANTED WAS A
LITTLE RESPECT!

RESPECT IS A
THING YOU HAVE
TO EARN.



THIS IS NOT
THE END OF THE
WORLD. I FORGIVE
YOU, FOR ALL THAT
YOU'VE DONE...I
FORGIVE YOU. I
JUST DON'T WANT
YOU IN MY LIFE
ANYMORE.



ALL YOU
HAVE TO DO
IS...GO AWAY...
AND NO HARM
WILL COME
TO YOU.







RUNYON'S APARTMENT.







MINUTES LATER.

THAT'LL BE
FIVE HUNDRED
DOLLARS,
PLEASE.

LITTLE
HIGH, DON'T
YA THINK?

STOP
TOLL

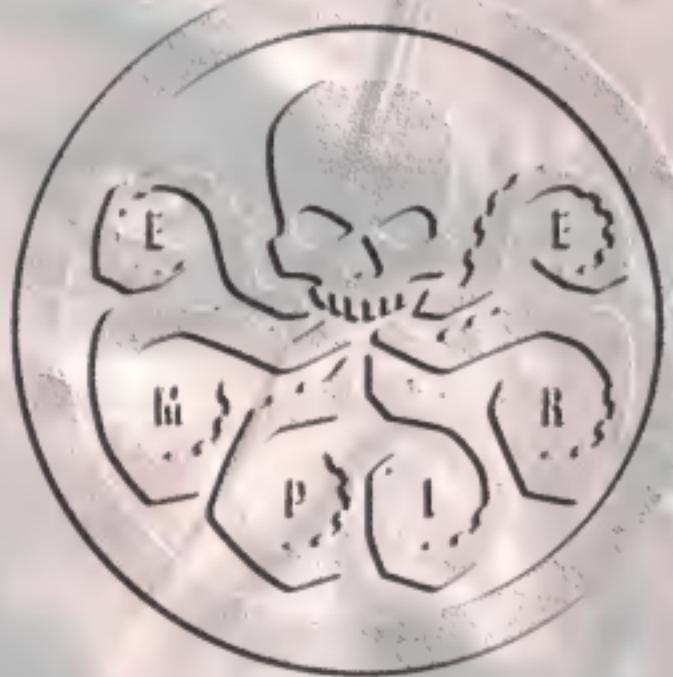
I DO THINK
IT'S A HIGH PRICE.
YES SIR, I DO. BUT
SURELY SOMEWHERE
IN YOUR TRAVELS
YOU MUST HAVE
HEARD OF...





NEXT: ACT 2





N / A / L / I

